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The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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BY THE FIRESIDE.

What is it fades and flickers in the fire,
Mutters and sighs, and yields reluctant breath,
As if in the red embers some desire,
Some word prophetic burned, defying death?

Lords of the forest, stalwart oak and pine,
Lie down for us in flames of martyrdom:
A human, household warmth, their death-fires shine;
Yet fragrant with high memories they come;

Bringing the mountain-winds that in their boughs
Sang of the torrent, and the flashy edge
Of storm-swept lakes; and echoes that arouse
The eagles from some splintered eyrie ledge;

And breath of violets sweet about their roots;
And earthy odors of the moss and fern;
And hum of rivulets; smell of ripening fruits;
And green leaves that to gold and crimson turn.

What clear Septembers fade out in a spark!
What rare Octobers drop with every coal!
Within these costly ashes, dumb and dark,
Are hid spring's budding hope, and summer's soul.

Pictures far lovelier smoulder in the fire,
Visions of friends who walked among these trees,
Whose presence, like the free air, could inspire
A winged life and boundless sympathies.

Eyes with a glow like that in the brown beech
When sunset through its autumn beauty shines;
Or the blue gentian's look of silent speech,
To heaven appealing as earth's light declines;

Voices and steps forever fled away
From the familiar glens, the haunted hills,—
Most pitiful and strange it is to stay
Without you in a world your lost love fills.

Do you forget us—under Eden trees
Or in full sunshine on the hills of God—
Who miss you from the shadow and the breeze,
And tints and perfumes of the woodland sod?

Dear for your sake, the fireside where we sit
Watching these sad, bright pictures come and go;
That waning years are with your memory lit,
Is now the lonely comfort that we know.

Is it all memory? Lo, these forest-boughs
Burst on the hearth into fresh leaf and bloom;
Waft a vague, far-off sweetness through the house,
And give close walls the hillside's breathing room.

A second life, more spiritual than the first,
They find, a life won only out of death.
O sainted souls, within you still is nursed
For us a flame not fed by mortal breath!

Unseen, you bring to us, who love and wait,
Freshness of heavenly hills, immortal air!
No flood can quench your heart's warmth, or abate:
Ye are our gladness, here and everywhere.

—*Lucy Larcom.*

LET US PRAY.

Unless the universe is ordered on a false and deceitful plan, and unless our own being is a wretched mockery, there must be as ample provision to meet our nobler needs as to meet our bodily wants. Our relations with the ever-giving Providence through external nature are no more real than our relations with the ever-giving Providence through our mental and moral faculties. Then we may reasonably conclude that the condition upon which our spiritual wants may be met will be analogous to those by which our bodily supplies are provided. In both cases we must ask, seek, knock; that is, we must put ourselves in the way to receive. To apply for help by complying with the conditions upon which help is given,—this is the essence of prayer. For the bodily supplies we reach outward; for the spiritual supplies we reach inward. In either case, our desires and expectations turn toward the Invisible. The divine generosity meets us in the resources of nature to satisfy our bodily hunger; the same divine generosity meets us in the resources of truth and grace to satisfy our aspirations.

For one precious moment, let us try to think of the supreme and universal Spirit as an exhaustless source of wisdom, or truth; of goodness, or love; and of righteous will-power, or purity. Then let us inquire, How can that wisdom come into our understanding, that goodness into our affections, that righteousness into our will?

I hold it just as impossible for a man to increase in wisdom, love, or righteousness, without receiving something from the deeper Source, as that his bodily powers should be increased without nourishment. The child weighing ten pounds cannot become a man weighing a hundred and fifty pounds without taking a hundred and forty pounds of new material. We say he grows,—as if that were the simplest thing in the world! Yes; but he grows by receiving; he grows by compliance with conditions; he grows because he is alive and shares the nature of the things he feeds upon. There must be a corresponding provision by which he receives truth, love, and moral power out of the infinite supply.

In childhood, when I heard a blessing asked at the table, I wondered if God did something just then to the food,—if he worked some miracle of transubstantiation, making the bread and meat more fit for human use. In later years it grew clear to me that when food is received in that grateful, cheerful, and companionable spirit which favors both good digestion and mental elevation, it may yield a double blessing. By reminding us of our dependence and of the divine generosity, it may nourish the mind as well as the body. And in considering the processes by which we procure, prepare, appropriate, and enjoy our daily bread, I see now an illustration of the whole method of intercourse between God and man. We continually take, by thought and industry, what he gives in wisdom and love. We are ever asking and receiving, seeking and finding; and because he lives we live also. Whether we realize it or not, our life, like Christ's, is hid in God.

Prayer is not a magical method of securing blessings, temporal or spiritual; and we are not to look for magical answers. We are simply to put ourselves in the attitude or inward condition which makes it possible for benefits to come. This implies no change in the law; it means, simply, that we conform and keep step to the music of the universe.

Indeed, the more we know of natural law, the more surely we trust ourselves to its keeping; the more confidently we appeal to its provisions; the more largely we draw upon its resources. Thus we learn to pray without ceasing; for life itself becomes a prayer. Our souls seek the true, the beautiful, and the good, as our eyes seek the light. We ask after the love of God and the will of God as we ask for the companionship and sympathy of our friends. We get what we desire when our desire is in harmony with what is best.

"According to your faith, so will it be unto you," is the doctrine of Jesus. If we expect only what is rightfully ours, we cannot expect too much. We grow more susceptible to impressions as we yield to them. There are fine forces and influences which enter into our being whenever our thoughts, affections, and choices make us receptive. Our passions are calmed; our troubles are soothed; our vision is cleared; we feel the attraction of heavenly powers and pure spirits; our faculties are invigorated; we are bathed in soft waves of light and peace.

There are some who tell us that prayer is merely an invocation or address to one's self,—a kind of spiritual gymnastic exercise. Well, this might be useful. But a little reflection shows that even bodily exercise does not *create* strength. The athlete draws in more force from nature by using what he has. His practice is a kind of prayer; it is the expression of his desire. It is not necessary to think of God as sitting in the sky, and bending to listen to our requests, and then sending down what we ask. The whole transaction may take place in a man's own mind, and yet it may be a transaction with the Power by

which he lives. For I think God is as truly present and active within us as in any part of his creation.

"Every inward aspiration is His angel undefiled;
And in every 'O my Father!' sleeps the answer, 'Here, my child!'"

The spirit of Jesus is the spirit of prayer. We cannot know what took place in the solitude of his own mind when he turned away from the haunts of men to be alone with the Father. I cannot believe that he spent the midnight hours in agonizing pleadings and wrestlings, as if he would overcome some unwillingness in the mind of God. It seems more likely that he was listening for instruction, that he was absorbed in contemplation, that he was submitting his whole being to the influences of that unseen Spirit which flooded him with such wonderful light and love and power and peace. We might learn from him that communion with God—coming into some share of the divine qualities—is the truest prayer.

Oh, if we half believed, would not our whole souls lie open to the sunshine and warmth of heaven? But as we have eyes and do not see because we do not look, as we have ears and do not hear because we do not listen, as we have minds and yet are low in intelligence because we are not thoughtful and studious, so we have a religious nature and yet remain unspiritual because we give so little *attention* to the greatest of all realities. A thousand vanishing spectacles blind our eyes to the heavenly vision. A thousand rattling sounds make us deaf to the one still, small voice which alone can teach the true wisdom.

If we are confirmed in a habit of mental distraction, even the outward forms of worship may be a part of our worldliness.

Just as a good night of rest prepares us for a good day of toil, so may a season of withdrawal and meditation prepare us for the better discharge of our social and secular obligations. We greatly need more calmness, self-possession, serenity; and if we find these blessings on the mount, we shall bring them down into the valley. Then the spirit of prayer will mix with our common moods, and hallow our common pursuits. We shall learn to ask for wisdom and guidance, just as the seaman watches the constellations and studies the chart of his voyage. We shall seek our spiritual exercises and comforts, just as we go every morning to our tasks and return every evening to the shelter of our homes. We shall ask forgiveness and inward cleansing, just as we would wash our hands or brush the dust from our garments. Then, wherever we rove or rest, the invisible Presence will be as real as the dearest human companionship. But the art of spiritual living requires practice; and the Lord is found only by them that seek him with the whole heart.

"When thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee." "For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those that seek him."—*Charles G. Ames.*

THE STILL HOUR.

SHORT PRAYERS.

May we rejoice with those that rejoice, and weep with those that weep.

May we render unto all their dues.

May we love our neighbors as ourselves.

Awaken us, Lord, from our sleep.

THOUGHTS FOR THE STILL HOUR.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.—Col. iii. 1.

Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.—Heb. xii. 3.

We have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.—2 Cor. v. 1.

Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—2 Cor. iv. 17.

Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace,
To silence envious tongues. Be just and fear not;
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's.—*Shakespeare.*

Make no great account of who may be for thee or against thee, but mind and take care that God be with thee in every thing thou dost.—*Thomas à Kempis.*

Let us rejoice. Happy the hemisphere where every man is accounted a king, every woman a queen, every child an heir apparent, every hat a crown, every chair a throne, every dwelling a castle, and every little dooryard a royal demesne. But let us keep on, unresting, till justice and righteousness shall be in all our laws, and love and peace in all our hearts.—*Selected.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

NOTICE.

Please take notice that all letters for the Book Club must be at hand by the first of the month previous to date of publication, also written in ink and on one side only of the paper.

REQUESTS.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister, as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. I am thankful for the *Cheerful Letter* the past year, and other good reading, that has been sent me. I enjoy reading it, and to have it for my little girl. I am not able to work. The little girl is all the help I have; she would be pleased to get letters from some girls of her own age. She is nine years old. I have not suffered so much pain this spring from rheumatism, as I have in past years. Thanking you all for past favors, I trust you may remember me in the future. (Mrs.) Sallie M. Ogle, Barren Spring, Virginia, Route 1, Box 76.

2. Will you kindly grant me space in the *Cheerful Letter*, that harbinger of love and dove of peace, that brings good cheer to the humble cottage of thousands of neglected poor, to say we have rehabilitated an old, vacant storeroom, and here we meet, each Sunday evening, and talk to a score or two of neglected men and women, who, like myself, have no spiritual anchorage? The Unitarian literature we have been able to get together is giving us encouragement and settled opinions, and we infinitely desire more of it. Some of us are among the "down and out" of the world, but are worth trying to save. We are poor and every day seems a tragedy. We have conferred, time and again, as to the matter of books and literature, and how to get them, and we sincerely hope you will publish our plea, and that some of the many good friends of the *Cheerful Letter* will write of (or send us) books, magazines, and sermon-tracts. All would be appreciated. Address, (Mr.) J. F. Harris, 200 N. Crysler Street, Independence, Missouri. (The books and leaflets asked for are being sent.)

3. I am writing to ask if you have on hand any text-books on English, Roman, and French History, Psychology, and Moral Science. I would be very grateful for any of these for private tuition work; also a College Grammar. Any time you may have a barrel of literature in good condition, that you can spare, send it at my expense. Sincerely yours, (Rev.) William A. Alleyn. Freight address, Ross, Indiana, M. C. R. Joliet Div. P.O. or Exp., simply Ross, Indiana.

4. Reading will be much appreciated by Miss Ethel Witt, Ironsburg, Tennessee. Ironsburg is in the mountainous part of East Tennessee. Miss Witt lives fifteen miles from the little town, and surrounded on all sides by mountains. She has six sisters and three brothers, she being the eldest.

5. Mrs. Ethel Tucker, Critz, Virginia, asks for the "History of Daniel Boone."

6. Mrs. Bettie Joyce, Stuart, Virginia, R. F. D. 5, will appreciate magazines.

7. A Bible is asked for by Mr. T. J. Herrin, Jermyn, Texas.

8. I want to thank all that have remembered me since and while I was sick. I shall be twenty-one years old the 22d of July. Hope each of you will remember me that day. I would be glad if some one would send me the *Ladies' Home Journal.* I would be very glad indeed of any popular music. Katie E. Shepherd, Sandidges, Virginia, Route No. 2.

9. Mrs. Mary E. Decker, 1901 North Campbell Street, Springfield, Missouri, asks for light reading.

10. I would be so glad of some good reading matter suitable for myself, "a young girl," and also something for my two brothers, Walter and Jesse Brown, aged twelve and fourteen years. I would be glad of a young lady correspondent. Allie Brown, Dothan, Alabama, Route 7.

11. I come to you asking for something interesting for a schoolgirl to read. I am very anxious about the *Woman's Home Companion* or any reading suitable for a girl of twenty years of age. I would like to have a girl correspondent of about my age. (Miss) Emma Ingold, Ansonville, North Carolina.

12. I come to thank every one who has been so good to send me reading matter for the past year. I am sick a great deal of the time, not able to work, and the magazines I receive are so much pleasure to me. I would like a Dictionary. It would be greatly appreciated, as I need one so often —Webster's or Worcester's. Many good wishes to all the dear *Cheerful Letter* members. Mrs. G. W. Johnson, Walnut, North Carolina.

13. Mrs. Hattie Ray, Jermyn, Texas, will appreciate any reading, and especially wishes anything on fancy work.

14. I would be very glad to join the Book and Magazine Club. I live in the country and get very lonely. I am very fond of good standard novels and good magazines. Mrs. J. E. Magann, Sandidges, Virginia.

15. I should very much like to get some books suitable for girls from twelve to fourteen years old, as I have two girls that age. We live up here in the mountains and it is hard to get reading, so I would be so thankful for them. Mrs. Eva Wilson, Ridgway, Colorado, Log Hill Mesa.

16. Connie Hamilton, Ironsburg, Tennessee, asks for reading for herself and picture books for her little brothers and sisters.

17. Miss Fannie Blocker, Jermyn, Texas, asks for "Wide, Wide World" and "Ten Nights in a Bar-room."

18. I am a boy fourteen years old. I have lost my little brother and feel lonely and would like to receive post-cards or story-books. I would also be glad if some one would send me the *Cheerful Letter*. Slnerley Joyce, Stuart, Virginia, R. F. D. No. 5.

19. I wrote to the *Cheerful Letter* once and received some nice things for myself and sister; thank all who sent them. I have four sisters and one brother. My sister Dovie, aged fourteen, would like to receive "The Story of the Gospel," *The Ladies' Home Journal*, and *The Woman's World*. For myself I would like to receive current and back numbers of *The Woman's Home Companion*, *Harper's Weekly*, and *Munsey's Magazine*. I would like for some one to continue sending me *The Beacon*. Dovie and Birtie Turner, Dodson, Virginia, Box 10.

20. Mrs. B. F. Walker sends the following addresses for suitable reading: Leo Meister, Camden, Washington (nine years old); Clarence Saylor (twelve), Golden Saylor (seven), of Schellville, California.

21. Mrs. Susie Martin, Stuart, Virginia, R. F. D. 5, asks for light reading and picture cards.

22. Miss Cook Smith, a lonely person keeping house for her brother, who has four motherless children, will appreciate light reading and pictures.

LETTERS.

Please thank the *Cheerful Letter* friends for all the pleasure given me upon my birthday. Such lovely postal cards and letters! How could one be lonely! One lady sent a P. C. Album *filled* with birthday cards. I do not know surely, but it looks as though her Alliance has each contributed a card towards it; isn't that a beautiful idea? There were two new books, too; such a treat for us, and also for our friends. I drove two miles to-day to carry reading to a lady who has been laid up, for four months, with sciatica, and she is so glad of something to help pass the time. Several friends sent cards with no names on them. To all whom I knew, I have written thanks, and I wish to thank the others through the *Cheerful Letter*. (Mrs.) B. F. Walker, Sonoma, California.

I have had a letter from the mother of little Ethel Jackson of Oskaloosa, Iowa, telling of her death the 27th of June, and she wanted me to write you and have the death notice put in the next number of the *Cheerful Letter* and thank the many persons who have sent her books and pictures to cheer her in her illness. The family belonged to the Society of Friends. The appeal that I answered was in the *Cheerful Letter* some two years ago or so. Ethel's birthday was July 4 and some of

the ladies of the Unitarian Church here remembered her on that date. Yours truly, EVE BROWN DICKEY. (Mrs. James N. Dickey.)

Ethel Jackson's mother's name is Mrs. Bertha Hurst Jackson, 402 South I Street, Oskaloosa, Iowa.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

JACOB ABBOTT: HIS WISE METHODS IN DEALING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.

Jacob Abbott was born in Hallowell, Maine, on the fourteenth day of November, 1803. He graduated from Bowdoin College in 1820, and from Andover Theological Seminary four years later. In November of that year he was catalogued as a tutor in Amherst College; his success was such that in the following year he was elected Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. His method of dealing with young men is illustrated in one incident, his moral power over them by another incident, in his short professorship. The college bell was at that epoch a favorite object for college pranks. The college bell at Amherst occupied, temporarily, a wooden tower. One day the boy whose business it was to ring the bell for prayers and other exercises came to my father, to whom had been intrusted the care of the grounds and buildings, with the report that the key to the padlocked door had been stolen, and asked what he should do. "Knock off a board, and go in and ring the bell," was my father's reply. "And what then?" "Leave the board off, and go in to your recitation." The direction may have been, and probably was, accompanied with some verbal expression of faith in the college boys. Pranks with the college bell ceased. They were no longer worth while; they were "too easy." When the permanent tower to the college was completed, the question came up in faculty meeting what to do to protect the bell. My father's proposal to leave the door unlocked and access to the bell open to all was discarded, a lock was provided, and the college pranks began again.

There was a revival of religion in the college. Some of the boys planned a mock prayer meeting, and in mere bravado invited Professor Abbott. He surprised them by appearing at the meeting, transformed it into a serious meeting, with, as a result, the conversion of at least one, I believe of several of those who were present. I can well believe it from my remembrance of his moral power.

I do not remember that he ever punished me. Yet I not only do not recall that I ever thought of disobeying him, but I do not remember ever to have seen a child refuse him obedience, and I have seen him with a great many young people of all ages and all temperaments. This *moral* power, Professor Phelps, of Andover, illustrates by an incident related in a letter to me, which my brother Edward has inserted in his brief biography of my father, appended to the "Memorial Edition of the Young Christian." A pupil in his school, of brilliant parts but wilful character, was ill with typhoid fever. She refused to take the remedies prescribed for her. Neither parents, doctor, nor nurse had any influence with her. "At length, as a last resort, your father was summoned. He took his seat by her bed, took her fevered hand in his, and for some time conversed with her, on indifferent subjects. When he had thus allayed the mood of resistance, which the persuasions of the physician and the nurse had excited,—they, meanwhile, having left the room,—he said to her something to this effect: 'The time has come for you to take your medicine, and in cases like this it will not do to be irregular; the remedies *must* be taken on the *hour*.' A slight emphasis on the 'must' gave her the sense of superior authority, but a similar stress on the 'hour' diverted her mind from the previous resistance and gave her a chance for yielding without conscious humiliation. Relating the incident, years afterwards, she said that she looked for a moment into your father's eye, and the look of resolution in it overwhelmed her. She took the bitter draught with the gentleness of a child. She spoke of it as illustrating your father's rare tact in uniting gentle words with indomitable authority. 'I should as soon have thought of fighting with gravitation,' she said, 'as with that eye.'"—*Lyman Abbott, in the Outlook.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

VISITING WITH NIGHT HERONS.

A Pleasure that requires Extra Devotion of even the most Ardent of Nature Lovers.

Shakspeare's Sycorax, the weird witch-mother of Caliban, the grotesque and bestial drudge of Prospero's Isle, lives in his tale of "The Tempest." In the great dramatist's mind she was probably the typical witch, making midnight excursions on a broomstick, glimpsed as she passed across the disk of the full moon, and heard oftener in hoarse

and squawking cries dropped from the dusk overhead and sending trembling rustics to cover, blessing themselves beneath the friendly shelter of a thatched roof in the kindly gleam of a farthing dip. It has been said that Shakspeare got his whole story of "The Tempest" from the tales of adventurers in the new world, Gosnold, perhaps, among others. If so, I am convinced that black-crowned night herons were the progenitors of the witch Sycorax. Gosnold and his men must have glimpsed them at night flying about Cuttyhunk, and if there was a heron rookery near by they might well have heard a good deal of the witch language which these birds use.

Away from the rookery in the day the birds are silent. At night as they fly over on fishing expeditions they occasionally call to one another with a raucous "quawk," which sounds as if a whole collection of rough consonants were tangled with a frog in the throat. That seems to be the night heron's only public speech. But in the rookery he who will listen will hear the witches gabbling and squawking among themselves, now and then uttering the word "Sycorax" as definitely as ever Prospero could have uttered it, or even the Bard of Avon himself. It is rather interesting, this utterance of the witch mother's name out of the plumed tops of singing pines, but not so curious as the ticking sound that is to be heard throughout the rookery when the birds think no danger is at hand. There is a monotony of contentment in it, as if each nest had a grandfather's clock which ticked genially when all things were right but stopped in warning the moment there was danger. For this unbirdlike ticking goes on when you softly approach the grove unseen, but the moment the birds discover you it ceases.

I owe my knowledge of one of the largest night heron rookeries which I have ever seen to Rev. Manley B. Townsend of Nashua, N.H., who, besides being the successful pastor of an important church, the secretary of the New Hampshire Audubon Society, and the master of an active band of Boy Scouts, manages to know the homes and haunts of most of the birds of Southern New Hampshire and a few over the border in Massachusetts. On a single day's trip with him I was introduced to the families of say a hundred and fifty night herons. Also, we visited the nests of a cat-bird, a flicker, a Maryland yellow throat, a phœbe, a least flycatcher, and a blue-headed vireo. Incidentally we met a ruffed grouse family, visited a porcupine den, haunts of rare ferns, one cave with an Indian legend attachment, sat out a thunderstorm on an abandoned farm, and tramped back to the city under a drop-curtain sky on which was painted the most vivid, complete, three-story rainbow which I ever saw in my life. All this between 11 A.M. and 6 P.M. Nashua is a busy place.

I am not sure now which was the best of all; whether it was the blue-headed vireo's nest so beautifully decorated with the finest films of white birch skin, the least fly-catcher which stuck to her nest till she had to be almost poked off so that we might see whether her eggs were spotted or not and thus determine whether she was a least or an alder flycatcher, or the hour I spent in the top of a sixty-foot pine amongst the night herons, but I think it was the hour in the heronry. All night herons which I have hitherto known have nested in swamps, usually the most remote and inaccessible swamps, their nests set in the few limbs of swaying white cedars. Such a swamp exists to-day in the Blue Hill Reservation on the borders of Ponkapoag Pond. No night herons build there now, nor have they for a score or so of years, yet it was once famous as the abode of a heronry. The place was raided so often and so vigorously that the birds finally left. I smile at the thought of one of these raids to this day. One of the raiders is now a prominent professor in America's greatest technical school. He had then, as he has now, the faculty of knowing just what he wanted and how he was going to get it. He came away from the swamp with far more than his share of herons' eggs. The side pockets of his jacket bulged and sagged with their frail blue cargo. His companions had but two or three apiece and were able to easily climb over a high stone-wall which lay where they had craftily led the professor on his way out. On the top, his cargo still safe, he hesitated.

"Jump, Wormy, jump," they shouted, "you dassent jump." And Wormy jumped!

Nowadays we raid heron rookeries to photograph their nests, not to rob them, though it is doubtful if the herons know the difference while the affair is going on. This rookery is on a sandy hill, far from any swamp, a pine grove of trees about sixty feet tall, in almost every one of which over a space of about four acres is a heron's nest. Those I have hitherto known were set not so very high in the swamp cedars. These in the pines are fifty feet up. Heron nests are notoriously loose of construction and one may often see the eggs through them when looking up from below. It is always a wonder to me how the eggs stay in in windy weather or how the young manage to reach

their growth without falling out. Some of them do not, as we had a chance to note, and the ground was strewn with eggshells, though most, if not all, of these had come down after the young had come out of them. Some of these nests were of the frail, loose construction which one learns to expect, but others were much more carefully made, well cupped and secure enough to hold three or four young herons without danger of falling, provided the birds behave and stay in the nest. Set in just about the same places where a crow would build, these nests were radically different in construction from a crow's. There was no lining or attempt to weave a circular body, but the cupping was done by the placing of the sticks themselves. You never see sticks set in a crow's nest spoke fashion, but that seemed a common custom with the herons.—*Winthrop Packard.*

BIOGRAPHY.

MAZZINI AND THE GOSPEL OF DUTY.

"Mazzini is a man of genius and virtue, a man of sterling veracity, humanity, and nobleness of mind, one of those rare men, numerable, unfortunately, but as units in this world, who are worthy to be called martyr souls; who in silence piously in their daily life understand and practise what is meant by that."

Such was Carlyle's testimony to the worth of Giuseppe Mazzini, printed in the *Times* of June 15, 1844. At that period the great Italian thinker was enduring the purgatory of exile in London, hoping against hope that Italy would one day awaken from the death-like trance fallen upon her since the popular movements of 1830–1. In common with many of her best sons, Mazzini had struggled in vain against the foreign and native despots who held the peninsula in disunion and servitude.

Born at Genoa in 1805, he drew into his being the republican traditions of that noble city and the larger hopes of union that Napoleon kindled in every Italian breast. As a boy of ten, he grieved at the subjection of Lombardy-Venetia to Austria once more; and the acquisition of Genoa by the Old-World pedant, Victor Emanuel I. of Sardina, seemed no less an outrage on popular liberty.

WAKING YOUNG ITALY.

Mazzini joined the secret society of the Carbonari, terrible by its deeds of vengeance; but he soon saw the futility of a dagger policy, and set himself, when driven from Italy, to awaken her youth to an enthusiastic and collective activity such as springs only from an inspiring and constructive programme. That he achieved by his Association of Young Italy, which he founded at Marseilles in 1831. The oath that he exacted from the members reveals the aim and character of the man:—

"In the name of God and of Italy. In the name of all the martyrs of the holy Italian cause who have fallen beneath foreign and domestic tyranny. By the love I bear to the land that gave my mother birth, and that will be the home of my children. By the blush that rises to my brow when I stand before the citizens of other lands, to know that I have no rights of citizenship, no country, and no national flag. By the memory of our former greatness and the sense of our present degradation. By the tears of Italian mothers for their sons dead on the scaffold, in prison, or in exile. By the sufferings of the millions—I swear to dedicate myself wholly and forever to striving to constitute Italy one free, independent, republican nation."

The religious, self-sacrificing zeal permeating Young Italy soon became a political force of wondrous potency, which, under cleverer guidance than Mazzini's, expelled the Austrians, overturned the temporal power of the papacy, dethroned the Spanish Bourbons at Naples and four dukes in the north centre of the peninsula. But I have no space in which to describe Mazzini's share in the great events of 1849 and of 1859–70. It is enough to say that his quenchless faith and enthusiasm supplied the motive force, without which the lead of Victor Emanuel II., the subtle statecraft of Cavour, and the dashing bravery of Garibaldi could not have made the United Italy of to-day. Therefore Swinburne, in that noble poem, "The Song of Italy," rightly hailed him as the father of the nation:—

Thy children, even thy people thou hast made,
Thine, with thy words arrayed,
Clothed with thy thoughts and girt with thy desires,
Yearn up toward thee as fires.

The influence of Mazzini lay in his gifted and charming personality and in his inspiring message to mankind. Few teachers have been so much beloved for their own sake. As a barrister at Genoa, he frequently took up gratis briefs for the poor; he was a leader among the students at the University of Genoa, owing to his quick wit, lively talk, and generous championship of every noble cause. A skilful musician and brilliant essay writer,

he seemed born to shine in social and literary circles, had not Italy called him to the path of hardship and persecution. Even in exile his spirits rarely flagged. He was a welcome guest at Carlyle's house in Cheyne Row, Chelsea; and faith in the collective powers of mankind made the almost penniless exile a more cheery companion than the successful preacher of the gospel of force and individualism. In two sentences Mazzini summed up the weakness of Carlyle, both as prophet and historian:—

"Mr. Carlyle comprehends only the individual; the true sense of the unity of the human race escapes him. . . . History is not the biography of great men; the history of mankind is the history of the progressive religion of mankind."

Yet Carlyle loved Mazzini for his serene faith and his unfailing charm of manner. George Meredith, too, in his novel, "Vittoria," wrote of Mazzini's "large, soft, dark, meditative eyes"; of his smile, "which came softly as a curve in water, which seemed to flow with and to pass in and out of his thoughts; to be a part of his emotion and his meaning, when it shone transiently full. For, as he had an orbed mind, so he had an orbed nature."

Mazzini's personality pervades that beautiful poem, "The Disciples," by Mrs. Hamilton King, which describes the heroic efforts of his followers. The climax of their efforts was reached in 1849, when Mazzini was virtually head of the short-lived Roman republic. Margaret Fuller, the nurse of the wounded, thus describes the Triumvir at the time of the surrender to the French:—

"In two short months he had grown old; all the vital juices seemed exhausted; his eyes were all bloodshot; . . . but he had never flinched, never quailed; had protested in the last hour against surrender; sweet and calm, but full of a more fiery purpose than ever."

What was it that nerved this physically weak man through his long life of struggle and comparative failure? Certainly not love of fame or wealth; for that requires success as a stimulus. As Mazzini remarked in his essay, "Interests and Principles," "Martyrdom is folly to a people that has no stimulus outside material interests; to their intelligence Christ has lost all meaning. . . . Every revolution is the work of a principle which has been accepted as a basis of faith."

Accordingly, he thought little of the French Revolution of 1789, which, beginning with a mere declaration of rights, devoid of duties, could only produce selfish struggles, anarchy, and, consequently, a return to despotism. The vicious circle in which France revolved after 1789 was to him a warning that mankind must find a nobler inspiration, a firmer bond of union, than individual rights could ever be; and this social cement he found in the principle of duty. True, France achieved the freedom of the individual; but that idea, proclaimed by the Greeks, reaffirmed by the Reformation, was far from new. Therefore in 1789 France closed an epoch; she did not open up a new one. Mazzini believed that Italy, after all the trials of a thousand years, was destined to give to the world the truth evidently needed in this anarchic age, that only as citizens submit to the state, and work for its good, will society be built up in strength and beneficence.—*J. Holland Rose, in The Youth's Companion.*

A SONG SPARROW'S GRATITUDE.

"It is a rare occurrence for animals in a wild state to select man for a companion and friend, yet well-authenticated instances when this has been done are a matter of record," says the *Courier-Journal.* "The following incident is vouched for by a young woman who is a close and accurate observer: Last week my brother, a lad of twelve, killed a snake which was just in the act of robbing a song sparrow's nest. Ever since then the male sparrow has shown his gratitude to George in a truly wonderful manner. When he goes into the garden the sparrow will fly to him, sometimes alighting on his head, at other times on his shoulder, all the while pouring out a tumultuous song of praise and gratitude. It will accompany him about the garden, never leaving him until he reaches the garden gate. George, as you know, is a quiet boy who loves animals, and this may account in a degree for the sparrow's extraordinary actions."—*Our Dumb Animals.*

TO PREVENT RABIES.

We see in our daily papers of March 8th that some time since a dog having rabies bit two out of seven cows in a Boston herd, which the veterinarian has declared died of rabies, and in consequence the other five have been killed, as they might have been bitten. If this Pasteur rabies business is to go on increasing, it looks as though not only our dogs and cats must be muzzled but also our cows, pigs, and poultry, and there must be lots of Pasteur institutes for animals as well as humans, and a good many people will give up the eating of meats, which [as our veterinarians declare] may contain the germs of rabies.—*Geo. T. Angell.*

TO FLUSH, MY DOG.

Loving friend, the gift of one
Who her own true faith has run
Through thy lower nature,
Be my benediction said
With my hand upon thy head,
Gentle fellow-creature!

Like a lady's ringlets brown
Flow thy silken ears adown
Either side demurely;
Of thy silver-suited breast
Shining out from all the rest
Of thy body purely.

Darkly brown thy body is,
Till the sunshine striking this
Alchemize its dulness,
When the sleek curls manifold
Flash all over into gold
With a burnished fulness.

Underneath my stroking hand,
Startled eyes of hazel bland
Kindling, growing larger,
Up thou leapest with a spring,
Full of prank and curveting,
Leaping like a charger.

Leap! thy broad tail waves a light,
Leap! thy slender feet are bright,
Canopied in fringes;
Leap! those tasselled ears of thine
Flicker strangely, fair and fine
Down their golden inches.

Yet, my pretty, sportive friend,
Little is't to such an end
That I praise they rareness;
Other dogs may be thy peers
Haply in these drooping ears
And this glossy fairness.

But of thee it shall be said,
This dog watched beside a bed
Day and night unweary;
Watched within a curtained room
Where no sunbeam brake the gloom
Round the sick and dreary.

Roses, gathered for a vase,
In that chamber died apace,
Beam and breeze resigning;
This dog only waited on,
Knowing that when light is gone
Love remains for shining.

Other dogs in thymy dew
Tracked the hares and followed through
Sunny moor or meadow;
This dog only crept and crept
Next a languid cheek that slept,
Sharing in the shadow.

Other dogs of loyal cheer
Bounded at the whistle clear,
Up the woodside hieing;
This dog only watched in reach
Of a faintly uttered speech
Or a louder sighing.

And if one or two quick tears
Dropped upon his glossy ears
Or a sigh came double,
Up he sprang in eager haste,
Fawning, fondling, breathing fast,
In a tender trouble.

And this dog was satisfied
If a pale, thin hand would glide
Down his dewlaps sloping—
Which he pushed his nose within,
After—platforming his chin
On the palm left open.

This dog, if a friendly voice
Call him now to blither choice
Than such chamber-keeping,
"Come out!" praying from the door,
Presseth backward as before,
Up against me leaping.

Therefore to this dog will I,
Tenderly, not scornfully,
Render praise and favor:
With my hand upon his head
Is my benediction said
Therefore and forever.

And because he loves me so,
Better than his kind will do
Often man or woman,
Give I back more love again
Than dogs often take of men,
Leaning from my human.

Blessings on thee, dog of mine,
Pretty collars make thee fine,
Sugared milk make fat thee!
Pleasures wag on in thy tail,
Hands of gentle motion fail
Nevermore to pat thee!

Downy pillow take thy head,
Silken coverlid bestead,
Sunshine help thy sleeping!
No fly's buzzing wake thee up,
No man break thy purple cup
Set for drinking deep in.

Whiskered cats aroynted flee,
Sturdy stoppers keep from thee
Cologne distillations;
Nuts lie in thy path for stones,
And thy feast-day macaroons
Turn to daily rations.

Mock I thee, in wishing weal?
Tears are in my eyes to feel
Thou art made so straitly;
Blessing needs must straiten too—
Little canst thou joy or do,
Thou who lovest greatly.

Yet be blessed to the height
Of all good and all delight
Pervious to thy nature;
Only loved beyond that line
With a love that answers thine,
Loving fellow-creature.

—*Elizabeth Barrett Browning.*

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 45 Spring Lane, Canton, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

ENIGMA.

I am composed of 48 letters.
My 29, 18, 7, 47, is a part of the body.
My 11, 1, 41, 27, is a verb.
My 14, 19, 35, is a small mean house.
My 2, 21, 48, 23, is a kind of wine.
My 43, 36, 5, is to undermine.
My 37, 12, 20, 8, is a kind of hawk.
My 3, 10, 39, 30, is a flower.
My 27, 38, 22, 9, is a fast season.
My 45, 44, 13, is a drinking vessel.
My 24, 40, 42, 15, is a military command.
My 32, 4, 6, 34, is a part of the body.
My 46, 28, 26, 17, is a kind of fog.
My 16 is a vowel.
My 3, 31, 43, 37, is a kind of danger.
My 5, 33, 9, is a large hole.
My 34, 25, 46, 30, is a period.
My *whole* is a famous saying of General Grant.

II.

A GEOGRAPHICAL STORY.

In Two Parts. Part I.

While waiting in the depot for a west-bound train I fell in conversation with a young lady who seemed to be very (1), *islands west of S. A.* She gave her name as (2), *a river in the northwestern part of Siberia*, (3), *an island south of England.*

After conversing with her for some time the train arrived and I bade her (4), *a cape at the southeastern extremity of Greenland.*

After seating myself in the car I looked across to the seat opposite me and there was my friend. The moment she saw me she came across the car and sat down in the seat with me.

She had a great many bundles, among which was a very queer-looking one. Upon questioning her I found it contained a cow's (5), *a cape off the southern extremity of South America*, which she was taking to her cousin. She also had a lunch-basket. She opened it and asked me to eat something, but I refused, for I saw that the basket enclosed a (6), *islands off the southwestern coast of N. A.*, and some fried (7), *a cape off the northeastern coast of the U.S.*, and a bottle of (8), *a river in the northern part of Montana*, and some (9), *a city in the southwestern part of Spain.* She also carried a bird-cage, which had a (10), *islands off the northwestern coast of Africa*, in it.

—*The Beacon.*

Part two will appear in the November number.

III.

FLORAL ANAGRAMS.

1. True Game Nill: One of the most imposing of weeds.
2. Coy Will: A water flower.
3. A Sham Grim Lord: A flower with edible leaves.
4. Looses Salmon: A wood flower with blackish berries.
5. Wags Fleet: A flower with medicinal roots.

—*The Wellspring.*

IV.

QUESTIONS IN HISTORY.

1. Who was the hero of Homer's Iliad?
2. What valiant hero was most active in defending Troy against the assaults of the Greeks?
3. What hero is celebrated for his archery?

V.

OLD SAYINGS.

Fill in the blanks with missing words and complete the saying.

1. As poor as a ——— ———.
2. As thin as a ———.
3. As fat as a ———.
4. As rough as a ———.
5. As brave as a ———.
6. As spry as a ———.
7. As bright as a ———.
8. As weak as a ———.

—*Selected.*

Answers to puzzles in the July–August number.

I. DICKENS CHARACTERS.—1. David Copperfield. 2. Little Dorrit. 3. David Copperfield. 4. Pickwick Papers. 5. Old Curiosity Shop. 6. Our Mutual Friend.

II. A DIAMOND.—

E
A S P
E S T E R
P E T
R

III. FLORAL ANAGRAMS.—1. Indian Pipe 2. Black eyed Susan. 3. Sunflower. 4. Dandelion. 5. Evening Primrose.

IV. INITIAL LETTER PUZZLE.—Oliver W. Holmes.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins, or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

HEREAFTER, ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS, INTENDED FOR THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, "THE CHAIRMAN, MRS. GEORGE G. SAVILLE, 25 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, MASS." THIS INCLUDES SUBSCRIPTIONS, CHANGES OF ADDRESS, REQUESTS FOR DISCONTINUANCE, BEGGING LETTERS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OR BRANCHES.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The regular monthly meeting of The Cheerful Letter Exchange will be held on Friday, October 2, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. All interested are cordially invited to be present.

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It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

The Chairman, Mrs. George G. Saville, is at the rooms, 25 Beacon Street, on Wednesday afternoons, from 2 until 4.30 P.M.

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